

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE  
FIRE ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT  
FEBRUARY 2001**

**OFFICE OF THE FIRE ADMINISTRATOR**

**Fire and Rescue Commission**

At its February 8, 2001 meeting the Fire and Rescue Commission discussed and/or acted upon the following items:

- Changes to the High School Fire Science Program – BRIEFING BY THE FIRE ADMINISTRATOR
- Standard Apparatus Identification Graphics Design for County-Owned Fire/Rescue Vehicles Policy, which establishes a standard package for lettering, logos, and other markings for these vehicles – APPROVED
- Fire Administrator recommendation to allocate \$251,587 in Senator William Amoss funds to 5 local fire and rescue departments – APPROVED

**Research and Planning**

- No Report

**Emergency Management**

- A Bioterrorism Health Care Meeting was held with county and federal hospitals, which heard a presentation by Dr. Casani, Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, on electronic surveillance for bio-terrorist agencies during the Presidential Inauguration.
- February Emergency Management Group Meeting
  - Montgomery County Chapter of the American Red Cross received an Executive Proclamation for outstanding efforts and responses over the Christmas holidays.
  - Mr. Jerry Herman, Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation, who received an International Humanitarian award from amateur radio group for his efforts with the Hurricane Net, was acknowledged with a MCFRS certificate on behalf of the Emergency Management Group for outstanding efforts with the National Hurricane Center.

- Presentations were given by Deputy Chief Jarboe (updates on the review of the Terrorism Annex), District Chief Stephan (November 16, 2000 gasoline spill and EOC activation), Ms. Henning (“lessons learned” from November 16, 2001 Bioterrorism exercise).
- Exercise Plan – EMG agencies have proposed 3 exercises for the remainder of 2001: a Bioterrorism tabletop exercise as part of Disaster Command System class on April 18<sup>th</sup>; a Hurricane exercise during the first week of June; and, a School Violence exercise during the summer.
- Training surveys were distributed to all EMG agencies for input on the 2001 Emergency Management classes. Next class is Disaster Command System for Bioterrorism Event on April 18<sup>th</sup>.
- Emergency Management Group Communications Committee has completed the Review/updates to the Emergency Operations Plan Annex A – Communications.
- First Responders – Preparations are underway for the April 7<sup>th</sup> for “Family Preparedness Class for Families and Friends of First Responders”.
- Haz-Link Database – The Hazardous Materials regulation database is currently tracking @ 171,400 chemicals in regulated businesses throughout the County. The database excludes retail establishments, but includes manufacturers, service stations, laboratories, schools, federal installations, dry cleaners, pools, and other facilities that store or use hazardous substances.
- Haz-Mat Training Grant – Through the combined efforts of Emergency Management and the Hazardous Incident Response Team, the MCFRS was awarded \$5,900 in federal training funds.
- Local Emergency Planning Council – Recommendations for new appointments to the County-designated slots have been forwarded to the County Executive for approval. The new appointments for the public and regulated business slots were promoted in a press release.

### **Community Education Safety Section**

- “After the Fire” outreach efforts
  - Assisted FS 08 A Shift in home visits
  - Completed the review of the “After the Fire” booklet that is being prepared to assist citizens who experience fire in their homes.
  - Continued development on “After the Fire” diskette for field distribution

- Community Outreach Activities
  - Composed various Memorandums and Safety Tips for dissemination throughout the MCFRS.
  - FS 33 C Shift conducted safety lecture and fire truck visit to the Har Shalom Day Care Center.
  - Participated in Damascus Community Wellness Day
  - Participated with Operations Bureau personnel and SafeHouse in the Child Passenger Safety Week event at White Flint Mall.
  - Participated in the NRC Health Fair.
  - Performed 2 home inspections.
  - Presented a Fire Safety lecture to the local Social Security Administration office.
  - Presented Fire Safety program to 4 nursing homes, impacting 130+ people.
  - Presented a "Fire Safety program to the Norwood Park Recreation Civic Group.
  - Responded to 139 inquiries (65 citizen, 56 fire department, & 18 media or governmental agency).
  - Reviewed and revised the fire evacuation plan for the CHI Center
- Media Activities
  - Developed and disseminated a number of press releases.
  - Responded to numerous media inquiries and conducted all requested radio interviews.
  - Taped a new segment of "MCFRS Today".
- Meetings and Conferences
  - Attended Community Safety Education Steering Committee meeting.
  - Attended Pedestrian Safety Blue Ribbon Panel meeting
  - Met with various MCFRS personnel on Community Safety Education issues.

## **Corporate Development Services**

### **Automation Section**

- Automation Training
  - Arranged Internet, Microsoft and other automation training for 22 MCFRS users.
  - Continued efforts with DIST, the PSTA and the vendor to test the MUSTER program on the DFRS volume of the Enterprise system. This is a computer-based EMS training program that allows students and instructors to interact on disasters.
  - Prepared and submitted a Request for Proposals to secure automation training vouchers to be used in FY02.
- Computer Management
  - Configured computers for Bureau of Operations and Bureau of Life Safety Services personnel who will be temporarily assigned away from Headquarters, during the office renovation project.
  - Met with the Desktop Computer Modernization staff to coordinate the replacement of MCFRS low-end pentium computers. All computers lower than 300 MHz will be replaced starting in April 2001.,
  - Responded to over 100 requests for hardware and software assistance from the various components of the MCFRS.
  - Work with the project manager on automation issues associated with the Headquarters office renovation project.
- Data Management
  - Continued efforts towards the upgrading of the Scheduling Office database programs.
  - Created an ACCESS database to collect data for the building coverage testing for the 800 MHz project.
  - Responded to 8 requests for statistical data and information from various components of the MCFRS and the public.
  - Worked on the compilation of data for the annual report of incident and unit response statistics.

## **Fleet and Facilities Section**

- Fleet Activities
  - Continued contract management efforts for the acquisition of replacement brush trucks and EMS units
  - Continued efforts towards the outfitting of new DFRS staff vehicles.
  - Continued participation in the PS 2000 project relating to on-board equipment.
  - Continued project oversight activities on the refurbishment of stock #1862020, a 1986 Seagrave pumper.
  - Inspected and took delivery of 6 replacement EMS units to be assigned to Gaithersburg-Washington Grove (2), Damascus, Kensington, Rockville, and Upper Montgomery County Volunteer Fire Departments.
  - Performed various project management duties associated with the performance of the Vehicle Maintenance Records Management Study.
  - Prepared pumper specifications documents for the Fire Administrator's approval and transmittal to the Office of Procurement.
  - Worked with the Division of Fleet Management Services to upgrade and acquire additional fleet vehicles for the Bureau of Operations and Bureau of Life Safety Services.
- Facilities Activities
  - Attended progress meetings for the Sandy Spring Fire Station 4 construction project.
  - Began initial preparations for the MCFRS FY03-08 Capital Improvements Program submission.
  - Participated with the Collapse Rescue Team representatives in the review and approval of plans for a Collapse Rescue Team storage building. This project is in the permitting process phase.
  - Performed project management duties for the Takoma Park Fire Station 2 replacement project.

## **Property Section**

- Assisted the Community Safety Education Section with a large procurement of smoke detectors for distribution under the Safety in Our Neighborhood program.

- Assisted the DCFD, the PGFD, and the Naval Medical Center FD with information on specifications, vendors and contracts on a variety of fire and rescue commodities.
- Coordinated the delivery process of GIS maps to and from all fire and rescue stations via the MCFRS courier program.
- Issued uniform apparel to the personnel in Recruit Class #19, as part of the CPAT process.
- Coordinated the fitting of protective clothing and dress uniforms for Recruit Class #19.
- Worked with Safety Team on several issues involving the use of Risk Management Rebate funds.

#### **DIVISION OF VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES**

- Committee Participation:
  - Chamber of Commerce Awards Committee
  - Operations Committee
  - Human Resources Committee
  - Safety and Training Committee
- Monthly Meetings
  - Emergency Management Group
  - Fire Board
  - Maryland Metro Chiefs
  - Fire and Rescue Association
  - Fire and Rescue Commission
- Personnel Issues
  - Attended a seminar on Suicide Prevention and Stress Management.
  - Attended the Volunteer Graduation ceremonies at the PSTA.
  - Greeted the incoming DFRS Recruit Class # 19.
  - Mediated personal, personnel and/or sensitive issues with various LFRD's.
  - Met with the Resource Groups representatives.
  - Met with 2 families regarding the College Live-in Program.
  - Participated in County Council Public Safety Sub-committee meeting regarding the High School Cadet program.
  - Participated in 2 County Council work sessions on the Length of Service Award Program.
- Other Activities
  - Attended a Legislative Reception in Annapolis.

- Attended Open House ceremonies for the new Permitting Section Office.
- Attended meeting with Fire Administrator, DFRS Chief, and the Maryland State Fireman's Association President and Vice-President.
- Met with Fire Board representatives regarding the 2001 County Fair.
- Participated with the Fire Administrator in a meeting with the Montgomery County Fair Board regarding the 2001 County Fair.
- Participated in a meeting on the Family Support Network project.

## **DIVISION OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES**

### **BUREAU OF OPERATIONS**

#### **Administration**

- Continued the refinement of the reporting process for EMBRS and for the Bureau's performance measures.
- Senior staff attended the "Suicide Summit" on February 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Various staff personnel completed a procurement training session that was conducted by the Office of Procurement.

#### **Safety**

No Report

#### **Specialty Teams**

##### **Collapse Rescue/Urban Search and Rescue**

- No significant events for the team during the month of February.

##### **Swiftwater Rescue Team**

- No significant events for the team during the month of February.

##### **Hazardous Materials Response Team**

- No significant events for the team during the month of February.

##### **River Rescue Team**

- The team is monitoring the construction of a temporary coffer dam and construction site on the Potomac River where Virginia is developing a new water intake. This could present operational problems in the event of an emergency. Therefore, the team is developing a response plan for review by Operations.

### **BUREAU OF LIFE SAFETY SERVICES**

#### **Administration**

No Report

## **Fire Code Enforcement**

- Code Enforcement Night Team (CENT) Program
  - During the holiday period – November, 2000 through January 2001 – 385 mercantile occupancies, 26 assembly occupancies, and 9 business occupancies were visited with 290 violations issued. The violations are categorized below, using the acronym ESCAPE.

<b><u>Category</u></b>	<b><u>Mercantile</u></b>	<b><u>Assembly</u></b>	<b><u>Business</u></b>
<b>Exits</b>	135	7	2
<b>Storage</b>	33	2	1
<b>Capacity</b>	0	0	1
<b>Aisles</b>	51	1	0
<b>Protection</b>	24	9	0
<b>Emergency Lighting</b>	23	2	0

- Montgomery County Public Schools Fire Safety Code
  - Master Firefighter/Rescuer Kelleher met with the MCPS officials to discuss the status of fire safety code issues and to maintain ongoing dialogue on other matters of mutual concern.
- Partners in Life Safety Program
  - Meetings continue with the Giant Food, Inc. The overall purpose of these meetings is to build a strong partnership between the MCFRS and the Giant Food, Inc. in the interest of for and life safety. The goal is to promote fire safety code compliance through a cooperative spirit and ongoing commitment by all employees of the Giant Food stores.
  - Discussions were held between District Chief Stephan and Master Firefighter/Rescuer Kelleher for the MCFRS and Giant Food, Inc. representatives regarding the script for the “ESCAPE” educational video and related issues. The video will be shown to employees of the Giant’s 25 Montgomery County stores with each store ultimately being recognized as a “Partner in Life Safety.”

## **Fire and Explosive Investigations**

- Bomb Technicians assisted the ATF with the detonation of mock devices to be used as evidence in several court cases.
- Fire and Explosive Investigators investigated 17 accidental fires and 13 criminal incidents in February.
- Fire and Explosive Investigators assisted several other county agencies in the execution of search warrants regarding environmental crimes in the Dickerson area of Montgomery County.



- The Bomb Squad responded to a total of 6 explosive incidents, 5 of which were for suspicious packages.
- The total estimated dollar loss for accidental fires was \$857,225 and \$7,700 for criminal incidents.

## **BUREAU OF PROGRAM SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **Administration**

No Report

### **Communications Section**

- District Patullo and Lt. Coleman visited 9-1-1 centers in Chicago, Salt Lake City, and San Antonio, as part of the 800 MHz Project.
- District Chief Patullo hosted the Council of Governments Communications Committee February meeting. The meeting was held at the PSTA.
- District Chief Patullo conducted an Emergency Communications class for the Emergency Management Group.
- FF Corte and FF Downing continue their training at the Emergency Communications Center. They have completed Administrative Call Taking and APCO's CED for "Vicarious Liability for Supervisors" training.
- Michelle Ruth was honored for her actions taken in response to Incident #12479 on February 10<sup>th</sup>, during which she gave Pre-Arrival instructions for an OB-delivery.
- The MCFRS Communications Directory is being updated. Send Marilyn Browning any information that you wish to have included in the directory.
- ECC Facts for February 2001:
  - 9-1-1 calls directed to Fire and Rescue Services (sorted) = 8,213
  - 9-1-1 calls handled by Fire and Rescue Services (unsorted) = 471
  - Administrative Calls in/out of ECC = 18,525

### **Recruitment/CPAT**

- An entry level written examination was given on February 17<sup>th</sup> at the University of Maryland, Shady Grove.
  - Over 310 applicants took the exam with a 75% pass rate.
- The week prior to the examination, the Recruiting Team presented an orientation session to the written examination. This presentation was

developed to support applicants who have no knowledge of the fire and rescue service. The session was not geared to preview test content, but to better prepare the applicant for the type of examination and to familiarize the applicant with the MCFRS. The session was well received by the applicants.

- The Recruitment Team met with the Office of Human Resources Safety Recruiting Team to discuss the continued success of our joint efforts in recruitment and applicant processing activities.
- Applicant Oral Interviews and Background Investigations will occur during the month of March.
- CPAT Fitness Mentoring will begin in late April. The sessions will be held 3 times a week and are designed to improve an applicant's level of fitness in preparation for recruit class, as well as the rest of their career.

### **Training Section**

- On Saturday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>, CPAT testing for Recruit Class #19 applicants was held at the PSTA. Of the 67 applicants tested, 41 passed – including 6 EMT-Paramedics, 20 EMT-Basic, and 15 applicants with no fire/rescue experience.
- Recruit Class #19 began on February 20<sup>th</sup>. 41 applicants were enrolled for the class. 40 applicants started on the first class day. Currently, Recruit Class #19 has 38 students, with 2 resignations.
- February statistics for Emergency Vehicle Driver Testing for career personnel are: 18 written exams and 4 practical exams.
- The nighttime EMT-Paramedic Class #21 continues with 20 students (6 career and 14 volunteer).
- The daytime EMT-Paramedic Class #22 continues with 13 students (12 career and 1 volunteer).
- Guidelines 2000 CPR Instructor Update has run for 15 sessions. A total of 131 instructor/instructor trainers were updated to the new American Heart Association (AHA) Standards. 39 instructors have not participated in the update and per AHA policy will not be updated as instructors for this Community Testing Center (CTC).
- CPR Update for MCFRS 2001 is still on hold pending release of materials from the American Heart Association. It is unknown at this time when the update sessions will be scheduled.

## **Wellness**

- Health and Fitness Initiative
  - Preliminary identification of a site for the new Fire and Rescue Occupational Medical Section (OMS) has been established. The DPW&T Division of Facilities and Services will pursue site acquisition with a tentative year-end availability. The OMS Request for Proposal (RFP) for a physician has been advertised with responses due in mid-March.
- Exercise Physiologist
  - The position description for this new position has been completed. The position is scheduled for advertisement in March with an anticipated on-board date of July 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Staff Psychologist
  - The position description for a MCFRS psychologist is being finalized with a tentative late-March advertisement date.
- Suicide Prevention Summit
  - In a joint labor/management initiative with Local 1664, a Suicide Prevention Summit was held on February 24<sup>th</sup>, with over 80 personnel in attendance.
  - Feedback for the “Summit” was very positive. A plan to further support the behavioral health component of the Wellness Initiative is being developed at this time.
- Annual Pikes Peak 10K Event
  - The event will be held on April 29<sup>th</sup>. The Fire Administrator has challenged the service to participate. A special registration fee of \$13 for fire/rescue service participants has been established and the Fire Administrator will provide a tee shirt for all that participate. To-date almost 50 personnel have signed up to run in the event.
  - District Chief Ey is leading the effort to support a water station. Please contact District Chief Ey, if you can help support your fellow fire/rescue personnel by staffing the water station.